instrument of style controlling the narrative tone and tempo . . ." (242). This chapter also makes frequent reference to his "non-purposeful approach to storytelling" (254), but this idea ultimately remains confusing, especially in light of Nechui's "national commitment" (337) and preoccupation with "various forces that endanger [Ukraine's] existence" (334).

For a book that sets out to rehabilitate Nechui as a "unique" figure of Ukrainian realism, it seems at times to damn him unnecessarily with faint praise ("Nechui's realism was not formulated on a sophisticated and original theoretical understanding . . ." (274)). Tarnawsky's diction on occasion is incongruous, as when he describes nineteenth-century characters as "party animals" (205) or repeatedly refers to two of Nechui's most famous characters, Baba Paraska and Baba Palazhka, as "hags" (a practice that only abates at the end). Transliteration is not always consistent (Kyiv, but Odessa instead of Odesa) and there is much repetition, with self-conscious cross-referencing, which becomes tedious. In general, however, Tarnawsky's book shines a welcome light on an important writer and period that research in the west has neglected. It does not go beyond a mimetic understanding of realism nor does it tackle the problematics of representation, but it does a good job in conveying the everyday subjects of Nechui's writings. What is missing is a sense of his art, or rather artifice, the modes he used to create "reality."

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Ukrainian Cinema: Belonging and Identity during the Soviet Thaw. By Joshua First. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015. xii, 251 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Figures. Tables. $90.00, hard bound.

Ukrainian cinema has received little scholarly attention outside Ukraine and the tendency to treat it as an insignificant part of Russian and/or Soviet cinema has persisted after Ukraine became an independent nation-state in 1991. Neither western nor Russian-language scholarship has actually addressed the question of national cinemas in the post-Soviet space, for which, like in Soviet times, language continues to be a dominant differentiating factor for the studies of national cinemas. Consequently, most Russian-language films are poached for inclusion in Russian national cinema.

Although there have been several books devoted to films of the 1960s Soviet Thaw, Joshua First's work is the first successful attempt to examine it from a non-Moscow perspective. The author does not emulate western Sovietology's blindness to the "nationality question" and instead places the national aspirations in the center of his inquiry. The international nature of the movie business forces national cinemas around the world to find their domestic audiences and to seek recognition abroad. First argues that Ukrainian national cinema of the 1960s did not have such global ambitions. Instead, it held a rather modest objective: to be recognized as a distinct entity within Soviet cinema and not to be confused with Russian cinema.

Ukrainian Cinema defines the tension between the ill-disposed, imperial portrayals of Ukrainians against their own historically and culturally derived image. Therefore, the national cinema in the book does not function as a geopolitical construct but rather as a system of cultural representation, what Andrew Higson refers to as national sensibility or structure of feeling. The book situates Ukrainian cinema in its historical context going back to the representational legacy of Stalinism that the '60s Thaw tried to dismantle. The core portion of the book is devoted to the making of the iconic film of the era, *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (1965), and to the *auteur* status

of its director Sergei Parajanov. Ukrainian cinema of the '60s and early '70s is often referred to as Ukrainian Poetic Cinema and the book justly allots substantial space to demonstrate how Ukrainian Poetic Cinema tried to position itself as heir to the Ukrainian films of the 1920s, particularly Oleksandr Dovzhenko masterpieces.

First needs to be commended for his meticulous research in both Ukrainian and Russian archives in Moscow. Consequently, he is able to juxtapose his findings in order to establish how filmmakers, studio executives and party officials in Moscow and Kiev (Kyiv) differently approached the question of national cinema as well as the problem of Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalism." First's research and analysis go beyond films canonized in Ukrainian scholarship and include films derided by critics as "genre films," which in Soviet jargon meant a form of a sell-out on the filmmaker's part. Moreover, First's book moves beyond the production side of the film business and tries to grasp the disingenuous concern with movie audiences during the Thaw, a welcome addition to the studies of Soviet cinema.

In this reviewer's mind, two concerns with the book need to be directed to its publisher. First, the quality of stills and pictures reproduced in the book is extremely low, to the point that it is impossible to discern anything in the pictures, not to mention any aesthetic qualities that the stills are supposed to illustrate. It is not just I.B. Tauris's problem but an unfortunate general trend among publishers. The second concern is the annoying editorial shortcut wherein the notes do not describe archival documents, just their location. The reader cannot possibly evaluate whether the information used in the text comes from a newspaper clipping, a private letter between two individuals, an official document, or a KGB informer report; not a negligible aspect of dealing with Soviet documents.

Joshua First makes a significant contribution to our understanding of national cinema in the post-Soviet space. By challenging the Russocentric view of Soviet cinema, he manages to delineate the complex relationship between the ideological state and the national aspirations of its constituents. Soviet cinema as we know it requires fresh approaches and careful reconsideration and First's book is a big step in the right direction.

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Breaking the Tongue: Language, Education, and Power in Soviet Ukraine, 1923–1934. By Matthew D. Pauly. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. xx, 456 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. $85.00, hard bound.

Breaking the Tongue asks how the efforts of the world's first communist state to create a new society through institutional transformation were shaped by the structures of everyday life, the limits of local and regional institutions, and the complexities of national, ethnic, and linguistic alignments and affiliations. This clearly written and effectively researched monograph focuses on educational policy as it was implemented, challenged, and ultimately practiced in the schoolhouses of Ukraine. By focusing on the daily implementation of educational policies, Matthew D. Pauly acknowledges the complexities of early Soviet education, including significant differences among educators based on training, location, generation, and political position; the tensions between the state's progressive vision for educational reform and its centralizing impulses that intensified with Stalin's rise to power; and grave social problems, especially the crisis of homeless and orphaned youth, which shaped the context, participants, and outcomes of this educational experience. Devoting atten-